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Balad Sheik council meetings ease rumors and discuss reconstruction projects

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BALAD, Iraq (Feb. 16, 2006) -- A recent insurgent attack in Balad, Iraq, was the main focus of discussion at a Sheik's council meeting in Balad, Iraq, attended by the leadership of Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

"I go there and discuss any situations that they might have against the coalition forces or anything that I might be able to help them with," said Capt. Keven Beattie, commander Co. B, 1-8 CAB.

The weekly meetings are a chance for Sheiks -- leaders of their respective tribes and villages - - to voice their concerns and try to solve disagreements between various villages within the region.

"(The Sheiks) come together and they discuss situations that are going on in their area -- trying to get contracts, projects for their area," Beattie said.

Sheik council meetings are also a time for Beattie, and other Coalition Forces leaders, to put truth to the rumors that may be spreading throughout the region.

"Usually I go there, listen to what they're talking about, if they stated that there are claims against me or the Coalition Forces in the area, he said, I try to solve those for them or give them the ground truth about what's going on."



Members of Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, attended the sheik council meeting in Balad, Iraq, to listen to the concerns of the tribal leaders as well as address anything specifically directed toward coalition forces. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Mott, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office, Feb. 16, 2006)